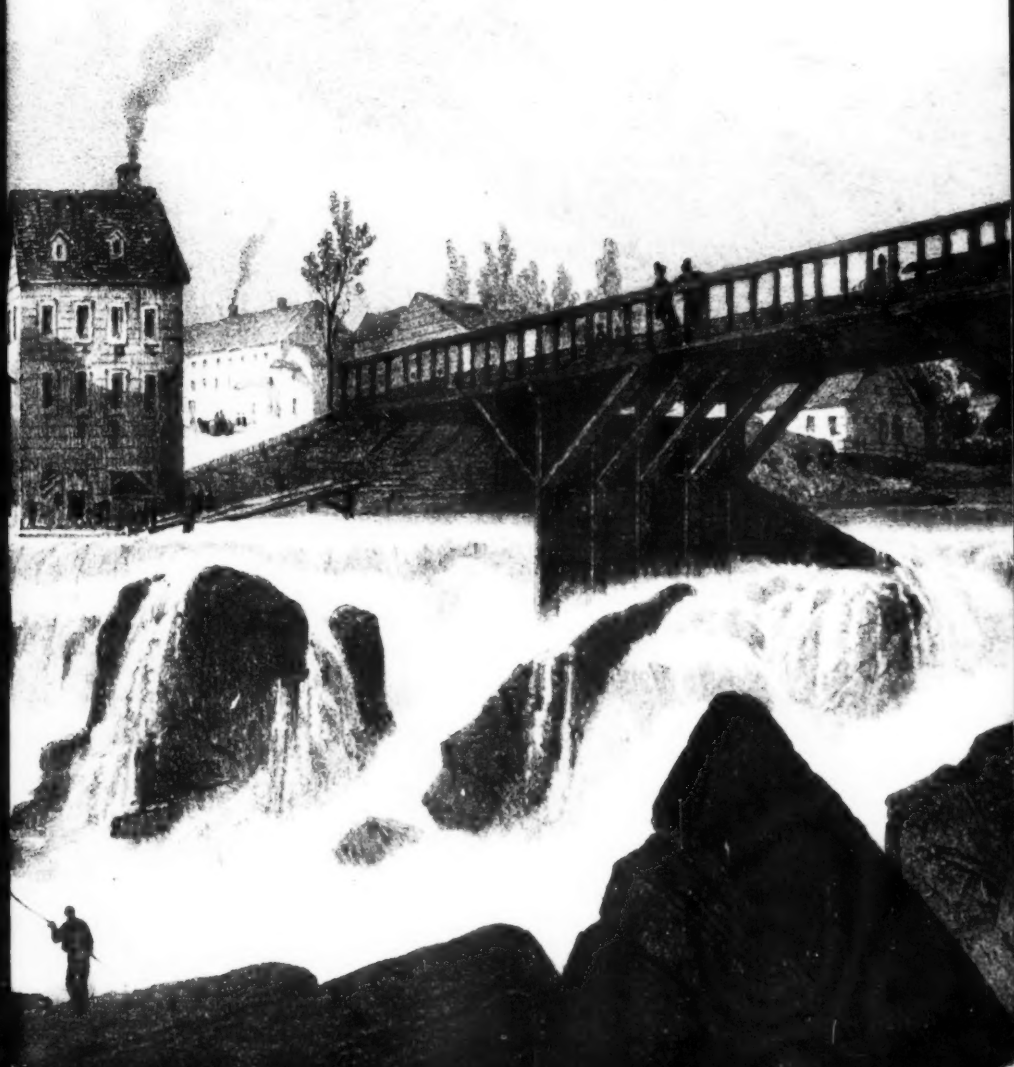


# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

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JULY, 1958

THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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PAWTUCKET FALLS c. 1823

From *Itinéraire pittoresque du fleuve Hudson et des parties latérales de l'Amérique du Nord* (Paris, 1828-1829) by Jacques Gérard Milbert.

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

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## THE ISLE OF RHODES: A FRENCH VIGNETTE

by CONSTANCE D. SHERMAN

The American Museum of Natural History

IT WAS October, 1815. As the *Little Fanny* sailed through the narrows into New York harbor, a slight but wiry Frenchman stood at her prow straining his eyes to catch every detail of the giant harbor panorama. Eager, inquisitive, enthusiastic, Jacques Gérard Milbert was interested in everything and in everyone. An artist, it was he who saved the tombs in the Church of Saint Denis during the Revolution. Later he became professor of drawing in the *Ecole des Mines*. After traveling through the Pyrenees to make geological studies and sketch picturesque sites for the French government he served on a commission to determine the navigability of the Rhone River and in 1800 took part in an expedition to Mauritius under command of Captain Nicolas Baudin.

Now he was again to be an explorer, but for the Paris Museum. For eight years this tireless naturalist collected specimens of every kind — mammals, birds, reptiles, fishes, rocks, seeds of trees and plants which he thought might be propagated in France, and sent them all back to Paris. There were fifty-eight shipments including nearly 8,000 specimens. Some of the live animals were intended for the *Jardin du Roi*, and Milbert gave detailed instructions in his letters to the administrators of the Museum about how they should be treated.

The beauty of the Hudson River Valley fascinated Milbert the artist. His drawings of over fifty landscapes are preserved in a portfolio which was published jointly with his journal of impressions, *Itinéraire pittoresque du fleuve Hudson et des parties latérales de l'Amérique du Nord*.

Traveling on foot, by stagecoach, or in one of the handsome new steamboats, which were capable of doing between six and seven miles an hour, Milbert got a clear picture of life in the early nineteenth century. It was an era of rapid westward expansion, towns were rising along river banks; the Erie Canal was finally finished, and the United States was daring to rival England as a producer of manufactured goods. Milbert thought this showed more patriotism than judgment, although he admitted that the town of Lynn, Massachusetts, excelled in the production of shoes — they even made *nailed* rather than stitched ones — and he also recognized the superiority of American cotton.

As he journeyed through New England, up to Canada, and south into Virginia, Milbert bewailed the destruction of the forests. His plea for conservation is so poignant that it seems to have been written only yesterday. He visited Boston, Plymouth, and then crossed Bristol County on his way to the Isle of Rhodes.

Milbert says: "I entered the state of Rhode Island through Pawtucket, an important village, which is a center of activity. On the banks of the Pawtucket River stand forges, founderies, factories manufacturing household utensils, cotton-spinning mills, fulling mills, mills producing flour, fish, oil, walnut and poppy oil,<sup>1</sup> nuts and bolts, nail-cutting machines, and many other factories providing work for the 20,000 inhabitants of the village and township. Next I visited the pretty Pawtucket falls, where, from the bridge over the water, I could see the upper course of the river and the rows of houses along its banks. After crossing several dams the river advances with apparent calm until it suddenly leaps sixty feet in a magnificent cascade. From this same point of vantage I could see the water boiling after its drop between massive perpendicular rocks that are remarkable for their imposing elevation. Trees growing out of these natural walls arched over the precipice, making it very dark. I hastened to descend along a path on the left bank and stood at the foot of the falls, where

<sup>1</sup>It is known that there was an oil factory at Pawtucket during the period of Milbert's visit, and linseed oil had been manufactured in the village since the colonial period. Either through a lack of understanding of English or ignorance on the part of his informants Milbert made frequent mistakes, and it is difficult to determine whether the information given in this passage is correct. The word *oeillet*, which Milbert used, ordinarily means carnation but has sometimes been applied to the poppy. Probably that is its meaning here.

I could see the whole picture. My ear was deafened by the roar of the cataract, and my eyes were bedazzled by the whirling waters spurting snowy foam. I saw waves force their way between rocks they had rounded or break on others whose sharp points revealed their primitive character. The pressure of the falls on the air was so strong that the foliage was kept in constant motion. A brilliant rainbow touching first one bank then the other was the final poetic note in this magnificent picture, in which the rustic mills bordering the falls and the bold bridge surmounting it were not unworthy accessories (Plate XLIII).

"From my chosen spot I could see that the broad rock beds are hollowed out of ledges revealing how the river has dropped during the course of the centuries. Constant humidity in this gorge provides excellent growing conditions for the arboreal giants, planetrees and creepers rooted in the rocks, where they form storied arches of dense verdure from the base to the summit.

"The landscape is not always so severe as at the falls. Industrious hands have felled trees on the heights to make space for dwellings, cultivated fields or green meadows. Wooden fences set at the edge of the rock wall preserve cattle from a horrible fall, and here the spectator can contemplate the countryside, the river bed, and the two wooden bridges linking the banks.

"The Pawtucket River forms the border between Massachusetts and Rhode Island only from the village of Pawtucket to the point where the river joins the sea in Providence Bay. After crossing this river, one sees a gently sloping road leading to the pretty town called Scot,<sup>2</sup> from which it is just a short distance across the granitic hills to North Providence.

"I must not forget to mention the dreadful hurricane, especially as they are of frequent occurrence in this region. I found a large crowd of farmers and manufacturers assembled at a tavern. They were passengers of the New York steamboat, but no ships were being permitted to leave the harbor because a tempest was threatening. The temperature had been slowly rising since one in the afternoon, while nature had lost that calm which betokens fine weather. Every living creature seemed anxious and the cattle in the fields had stopped

<sup>2</sup>Although Richard Scot was one of the original settlers of Rhode Island, Mr. Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd, Librarian of The Rhode Island Historical Society, says that there was never a village by that name in the state.

grazing to gather in a dense herd; with heads low and eyes glazed, they vented their secret terror in long bellows. About five o'clock the sky became covered with dense clouds which changed from blackish or brown to a dark dregs of wine hue as they approached. Although lightning flashes succeeded one another without interruption, the subsequent dull roar was still far in the distance. Without a breath of air to fan the lightest leaf in the trees, the heat was suffocating. Finally the pale, drab light vanished, the world darkened, and this final portent of the inevitability of a tempest redoubled the horror. The hurricane began with a dull, lugubrious roar; moving swiftly toward us, it drove away the burning air, which was replaced by such biting cold that we had to close all the doors and windows. The inner basin, into which the sea forced its way, now resembled a large lake ruffled by an impetuous wind. During the constant crashing of the thunder, the windowpanes rattled as if they were coming out of their frames, and the house seemed to crumble under the redoubled efforts of the southwest wind. This frightening state of affairs lasted for almost two hours, after which the fury of the hurricane abated. About eight in the evening the clouds broke and I could see parts of the heavens until they were veiled by still higher clouds. The rain stopped, gradually the wind subsided, and all signs pointed to the end of this fearful tempest.

"The next day I hastened to observe the ravages wrought by the hurricane. Isolated clouds, driven by contrary currents, scudded across the pale blue sky in different directions. The air was humid and warm, and from the earth rose vapor with a horrible stench. But the worst damage was on the ground, where the muddy soil was covered with debris, fields were devastated, harvests ruined, vegetables and flowers carried away. Soil from the hills had been torn loose and deposited in the plains, where it formed real hillocks in some places. Uprooted trees lay piled one on top of another or, twisted by lightning, resembled big cables; the foliage of those still standing, while mostly deep green, had an orange-red tint along the edges. Here and there dead animals littered the fields, while yards were strewn with pieces of roofs, shutters and fences.

"It is not known what causes these terrible tempests that strike the state at frequent intervals, but all the inhabitants still remember the one of September 23, 1815, and the city of Providence has not yet

repaired the damage it wrought. On this fearful day thousands of houses crumbled, vessels splintered in the harbor, and others were scuttled in the 900-ton basin.

"The city of West Providence, or simply Providence, capital of Rhode Island, was my destination. North Providence, where I was caught by the hurricane, is only a kind of annex about two miles distant, but, as it provides a panoramic view of the city, it was here I made my drawing (Plate XLIV), which shows the rear or northern portion of the city, with its clusters of houses dominated by masts of vessels at anchor in the harbor. To the left of the spectator the college [Brown University], a huge brick building, rises on a granitic elevation, around which are churches and private homes, and fishermen's shanties dot the beach.

"Before discussing the city of Providence, I think it would be useful to give a few details about the state of Rhode Island. The name comes from a large island the Europeans called Rhode Island (Isle of Rhodes) in Narragansett Bay. The English dissidents settled this island in 1638, after purchasing it, people say, by giving an Indian chief a pair of spectacles. This state, the smallest in the Union, covers barely 1500 square miles or 960,000 acres. The country is hilly, except in the southern part of Narragansett Bay. Even here, however, there are occasional isolated masses, with varying elevations, the outstanding one being Mount Hope in the center of Bristol County. This spot was famous for the valiant resistance of Sachem Phillips [King Philip], who sought refuge there from the English with the tribe of Pequods [Pequots]. Although the Narragansetts, who were deadly enemies of the Pequots, were allied with the English, he succeeded in escaping with the remainder of his tribe which had not been exterminated.<sup>3</sup>

"Two other remarkable mounts, Hopkins and Woonsocket, rise on a plateau at the northern tip of the state. The hilly nature of the country makes it fairly rich in minerals, particularly iron, which occurs in several places and is mined at Cronston [Cranston]. Copper is found in the Cumberland district, magnetic iron and coal in Portsmouth, anthracite on the Island of Rhodes, and both a medium grade sulphate and marble in Newport. Although the soil in the northern

<sup>3</sup>It is evident that Milbert had hopelessly confused the Pequot War and King Philip's War.

part of the state does not seem very fertile, there are good pastures. Farmers have taken advantage of this to breed fine sheep, achieving notable results by crossing ordinary strains with merinos of Saxony and Spain. Rhode Island horses are also prized for their strength and vigor. Forests are not large in such a small state; they are restricted to the western part and to the area near the end of the bay on the Massachusetts line. Oaks, maples, beeches, walnuts, and many white-wood species constitute the principal varieties.

"Several large rivers, the majority navigable for commercial vessels, and numerous streams add to the prosperity. The Seakonk [Seekonk], the Pawtucket, and the Pawcatuck, which forms parts of the boundary line between Rhode Island and Connecticut, are the largest.

"A third of the Rhode Island coast is cut by a vast opening, named Narragansett Bay after the Indians who used to dwell on its shores. This bay, the largest in the Union [*sic!*] measures 18 to 20 miles from the light on Point Judith to Seconnet [Sakonnet] Point on the other side, and it is 35 to 40 miles deep. This immense opening is filled with three islands so large that each one forms its own county: Rhodes, Prudence, and Conanicut.<sup>4</sup>

"At the northern extremity of this bay, and at the end of the long narrows where the Pawtucket empties, is the city of Providence, capital of the state. It was founded in 1637 by Rogers William [Roger Williams], a minister in Salem who was banished by his fellow refugees as ungodly. He bought some land from the Indians at Moshassuck [Moshassuck], naming it Providence as a token of his gratitude for the region which gave him shelter. There were many obstacles, for the Indians almost destroyed the new colony in 1675. Hurricanes struck, as fearsome as those in the equatorial belts, but the perseverance of the colonists ultimately overcame all these dangers, and, when the Indians were driven out of the territory, the city of Providence began to grow rapidly.

"As it is not part of our plan to trace the development of Providence, we shall merely describe its present state. The population, including that of the surrounding township, numbers 12,000 inhabitants. The streets are usually handsome and well built, although the commercial area near the harbor has the same unpleasant characteristics as the

<sup>4</sup>Here again Milbert was misinformed. Conanicut has never been a county and Prudence Island has never been a town, but is a part of Portsmouth.



corresponding section of Boston. The most important part is the harbor, which is arranged much like those in Marseilles, Toulon, and Le Havre. It is surrounded by broad wharves, along which stretch numerous warehouses filled with all the merchandise, whose commerce and export bring wealth to the city. It consists chiefly of salted goods, spices, hats, papers of every hue, sheets, cotton fabrics, canvas for sails, hardware, spirits, soap, and tallow. Almost all these articles are produced by factories in the state, whose political inferiority is compensated by the industrious activity of its inhabitants.

"The number of civil establishments in Providence is in line with its commercial importance. The city has eight churches belonging to different congregations, such as the Anabaptists, Episcopalians, Quakers, and even the Jews.<sup>5</sup> There are also a courthouse, jails, banks, and marine-insurance companies. Although the University of Providence [Brown] is less famous than Cambridge, it should not be forgotten. Founded by [Nicholas] Brown in 1764,<sup>6</sup> in the city of Warren, it was transported to Providence in 1770. It consists of a huge brick building set on an elevation commanding a magnificent view. Young people of the area follow its courses assiduously, and there is a library containing 5000 volumes.

"Second to Providence as the most important city in the state is Newport, with 7997 inhabitants. Near the southern tip of the Island of Rhodes, it is almost equal to the capital in its commerce, population, and number of public buildings. Among the cities or towns on the shores of vast Narragansett Bay we should mention the city of Bristol, situated on the cape of a peninsula, which, on the northern side, is connected to Massachusetts. It is also an important commercial center, which sends a large fleet to the West Indies and Europe. On the same peninsula is Warren, a rather large commercial port. Across from this on another peninsula is Warwick, notable for its woollen products. Finally, on the same coast, at the end of a broad channel, is Wicford [Wickford], near which Waly who condemned

<sup>5</sup>So far as is known there were no Jews in Providence at the time, and the first synagogue was not founded until 1854. Possibly Milbert was thinking of the Touro Synagogue in Newport.

<sup>6</sup>Although the four Brown brothers played an important part in the founding of Rhode Island College it was not called Brown University until 1804, when Nicholas Brown, Jr., donated \$5000 to the institution.

Charles I to death, one of Charles I's archenemies, hid for a long time.<sup>7</sup>

"It has been said that, in its climate, crops, and general aspect, Rhode Island is more like Great Britain than any other part of the Union. The atmosphere is usually very damp and the winter extremely rigorous, especially when the winds blow from the north and northeast. April is apt to be cold and rainy, May temperate and good for vegetation, June, July and August are excessively hot, while the temperature is glacial from October to March."

Leaving Rhode Island, Milbert returned to New York, and in 1823 went back to France. Funds from the Museum were not arriving at regular intervals, he had been forced to give painting lessons in order to defray expenses, and he felt that conditions would probably worsen if he prolonged his stay in America.

The voyage on the *Paris* was fairly calm until the ship reached the Normandy coast, when a terrific wind rose and the vessel was wrecked on the Calvados rocks. More misfortunes followed, for Milbert suffered a long illness, and then the administrators of the Paris Museum failed to keep the promises they had made while he was in America. Although he never received the financial recognition to which he was entitled, Milbert was honored with the Cross of the Legion of Honor, presented to him by His Majesty Louis Philippe in 1830. Upon his death, a decade later, the *Moniteur Universel* paid tribute to his modesty and complete devotion to the cause of science. Today we are aware that he made a notable contribution to our knowledge of the social history of the United States.

<sup>7</sup>Theophilus Whaley, a man of mystery, came to Rhode Island from Virginia around 1680 and erected a humble dwelling on the Willet farm at the head of Pettaquamscutt River in North Kingstown. Local tradition identified him as Edward Whalley the regicide. However, Ezra Stiles in his *History of Three of the Judges of Charles I . . .* (Hartford, 1794) proved this tradition incorrect. It seems probable that Whaley was a kinsman of the regicide and had also fled England for political reasons. New information concerning his stay in Virginia may be found in "Theophilus Whaley of Virginia and Rhode Island" by G. Andrews Moriarty, published in *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, v. 66, no. 1, January, 1958.

## EARLY MUSIC IN RHODE ISLAND CHURCHES

### III. Music in King's Church (St. John's), Providence,

1722 - 1850\*

by JOYCE ELLEN MANGLER

Lecturer in Music, Brown University

THE PROBLEM of reconstructing the history of music in King's Church, Providence (now St. John's Cathedral) is somewhat perplexing. The church history itself, dating from 1722, is well documented in terms of secondary sources, most of which include incidental references to music. However, the surviving original records of the early church which date only from 1771,<sup>1</sup> in the form of a few water-stained (in some cases, almost illegible) ledgers and books of pew rentals, furnish little to correlate with events mentioned in the historical accounts. A large number of important documents, obviously available to earlier historians of King's Church, have unaccountably been lost, leaving the authenticity of many supposed "facts" forevermore to the sanction of the printed page. Nevertheless, a great amount of additional information remains in the extant records which, when evaluated with studies of other Rhode Island churches, will contribute to a more complete picture of early music in this state.

Liturgical music in the earliest years of King's Church, if similar to customs in other Anglican churches of the times, consisted entirely of singing metrical versions of the Psalms for the services of Morning and Evening Prayer, with Holy Communion administered only three or four times during the church year. Since there was no organ to accompany the singing until a much later date (1771),<sup>2</sup> the verses of the Psalm were no doubt "lined out" by a clerk from his desk

\*The first two articles in the series appeared in the January and April, 1958, issues of *Rhode Island History*.

<sup>1</sup>The official records should begin in 1754, according to Wilkins Updike's *History of the Episcopal Church in Narragansett, Rhode Island*, ed. Rev. D. L. Goodwin (Boston 1897), vol. II, p. 179, citing the first page of the Parish Register dated March 4, 1754, "that all transactions of the congregation and of the churchwardens & vestry, be from henceforward written fair on a book." This quotation was taken from the records by William T. Dorrance, Esq.

<sup>2</sup>King's Chapel in Boston acquired the famous Thomas Brattle organ in 1713, the first in an Anglican Church in the colonies. Another was installed in Trinity Church, Newport, in 1733.

directly below the pulpit, to be sung responsively by the congregation. This practice differed in no way from psalmody in "dissenting" churches in the colonies.

The first documentation for the use of psalmody in King's Church is found in the published letters of the church's fourth rector, the Rev. John Checkley, to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.), sponsoring organization for Anglican missionaries to the Northern colonies.<sup>3</sup> His letter of April 2, 1747, to Dr. Bearcroft, secretary of the Society, requests that "I might be favoured with some Common Prayer Books with Brady & Tate's Psalms, & my Lord of London & Dr. Asheton upon the Sacrament, & some Silver-covered Primers for the Children."<sup>4</sup> It is possible that the Tate & Brady Psalter (1696) was an innovation at this time, rather than actually in use in Rhode Island by 1747, with the "Old Version" of Sternhold & Hopkins (1562) as the first Psalter at King's Church.

Mr. Checkley may have had some influence on music in his church, although it cannot be proved. Before coming to Providence in 1739 he was one of a "coterie of humorists" in Boston with John Read, Joseph Green, Mather Byles, and Thomas Walter.<sup>5</sup> Of this group, Rev. Mather Byles, minister of the Hollis Street Church, is remembered as author of the hymn *America*. Rev. Thomas Walter, with Rev. John Tufts, was responsible for the reformation of church music in America through the re-introduction of singing schools and tune-books.

The next known reference to music comes from *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles* . . . and gives information about the early organ at the First Congregational Church in Providence.<sup>6</sup> The presence of this instrument, the first church organ in town, prompted members of King's Church to obtain one for their own use. Through a loan from Mr. Lewis DeBlois, a pipe organ was purchased "from the Concert Hall in Boston from being employed in promoting Festivity, Merriment, Effeminacy, Luxury, and Midnight Revellings . . . to be

<sup>3</sup>The Anglican Church in the South, in contrast, was "established," being supported by the individual colonies.

<sup>4</sup>Edmund F. Slafter, *John Checkley, 1719-1774* (Boston 1897), vol. II, p. 213.

<sup>5</sup>Slafter, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>See the first article in the series "Early Music in Rhode Island Churches," *Rhode Island History*, vol. 17, no. 1 (January, 1958), p. 2.

used in the Worship of God."<sup>7</sup> The organ was installed in 1772, receiving a well-needed consecration in December. John Carter's broadside of the event states that the service took place on December 10 at six o'clock, the organ being played by Mr. Flagg (Josiah Flagg of Boston). It continues:

A number of Gentlemen belonging to the Town will assist on the Occasion, and perform the vocal Parts, A SERMON, on the Lawfulness, Excellency and Advantage of Instrumental Music in Public Worship, will be preached by the Reverend JOHN GRAVES, after which a Collection will be made to defray the Expence of bringing the ORGAN from *Boston*, and fixing it in the Church.

The announcement concludes with "Praise him with ORGANS," to which Nicholas Brown responded, on his copy now in the John Carter Brown Library, "Praise him with dancing and the Stringed Instruments. . . . Psalm 150, 4th [verse]."

William Blodget, whose advertisements for a concert and dancing school appeared in the *Providence Gazette* in 1772 and 1774, was apparently the first organist. Both Blodget and his successor, Dr. John Chace, are mentioned in a letter from Samuel Chace to George Washington, dated Providence, April 26, 1792, stating, "Mr. Blodgett served on our organ for some years. My son, Dr. John Chace, succeeded him and served gratis, near twenty years."<sup>8</sup> Dr. Chace, who had studied medicine in New Jersey before returning to practice in Providence, died in 1792, exactly twenty years after the installation of the organ. Therefore, either the letter is inaccurate, or Mr. Blodget served just for a short time. Updike, ignoring the letter, claims that Dr. Chace was organist for nine years, which would date his service from 1783.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, the pew records beginning in 1771 are of little help in clarifying the matter.

The American Revolution brought a crisis in the church. The rector, Mr. Graves, insisted on retaining in his services the various prayers for the King, in keeping with his ordination oath which included allegiance to the Crown. Following his retirement, clergymen of many denominations and several lay readers supplied the pulpit during the war years. In 1782 Rev. William Rodgers, a Baptist

<sup>7</sup>Franklin Bowditch Dexter, ed., *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, DD., LL.D.*, vol. I (New York 1901), p. 192.

<sup>8</sup>Updike, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 97-98.

<sup>9</sup>Updike, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 201.

minister and the first student of Rhode Island College (Brown University) after it had moved from Warren, was invited to officiate "in his Way" for a few Sundays, with the promise of a more permanent arrangement if he would conform to the Anglican liturgy. He was followed by Thomas Fitch Oliver, engaged on the basis of Deacon's Orders in 1783, receiving ordination in 1785. Rev. Moses Badger, an exiled loyalist returning from Nova Scotia, became rector in 1786, continuing to his death in 1792.

During this period the Church in the colonies was in a state of change, leading to the establishment of an American episcopacy and becoming the Protestant Episcopal Church in America. One of the primary undertakings of the many conventions associated with the movement was the preparation of an American Prayer Book, which in turn influenced music in all Episcopal churches. The *Book of Common Prayer* (published unofficially in 1786) as proposed by the Philadelphia Convention of September, 1785, considered such long disputed topics as "whether the subject matter of our psalmody or singing psalms should not be extended beyond those of David . . . so as to introduce a greater variety of anthems and hymns." It contained 135 texts — 84 from the metrical psalter, and 51 hymns — with eighteen psalm tunes and three chants.

The presence of such a large number of hymn texts was significant in itself. But of even greater importance was the appearance of tunes for chanting, a tradition of long standing in England which had grown into disuse in the colonies primarily through the absence of pipe organs for accompaniment. Chants had first appeared in an American tune-book only three years before (1783) through the work of another Rhode Island College graduate, Andrew Law, then conducting a singing school at St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia. A decade might be considered sufficient for the new Prayer Books to replace the old Tate & Brady Psalters at King's Church.

Returning to the church records, there is nothing to be found related to this great movement. From the records of 1771 the first acknowledgment of anything "musical" appears in 1786, this concerned with the purchase of coal in December "for the Organ Room" at three shillings. Coal was purchased in November of the next year, listed with such items as the sexton's remuneration for "washing the surplus [sic]" at one shilling sixpence and purchasing a quart of oil

for the bell. In December, 1788, five baskets of coal were bought for the organ room and vestry at two shillings eleven pence, with the addition of "1 Quire Paper for Christ' Hymns [Christmas hymns]" for ninepence, omitted from the preceding year.

In 1791, according to several historical accounts, correspondence was received from Mr. Gilbert DeBlois of London, whose father had made possible the purchase of an organ in 1771, reminding the congregation that the loan had never been repaid. The debt had apparently been overlooked because of the crisis during the Revolution, complicated by the inability of the church to pay during the depression which followed. Lawyers were engaged, settling the debt on payment of 200 pounds sterling plus professional fees, at a total of \$500 less than the amount due the DeBlois heirs.

The years following the death of Dr. Chace in 1792, although devoid of references to music, are nevertheless of considerable importance in the history of King's Church. On the death of the rector, Mr. Badger, the congregation looked no further than nearby Beneficent Congregational Church ("Round Top") where young James Wilson was serving an unchallenging assistantship to the incumbent, Joseph Snow. Mr. Wilson's several months in the pulpit of King's Church drew many of the New Lights to that congregation. By vote of the Congregationalists, his position at Round Top was made more attractive, and he returned with his followers.

During the ministry of the next rector, the Rev. Abraham Lynsen Clarke, the membership of King's Church petitioned the Rhode Island General Assembly to change its now out-dated name, common among Anglican churches in the Northern colonies as an added "protection" against the dissenters, to the present name of St. John's. At this time (1794) the United Society of St. John's Church was organized. It is from the one surviving book of minutes kept by this group that the next musical item appears, dated February 24, 1798, at 11:50, noting that

A proposition was made by the Revd. Mr. Clark for the Establishment of a singing school — that youth of our Society may have an opportunity of being taught that pleasing part of Worship. It was therefore thought advisable to appoint Majr William Allen, Wm. Larned Esqr, Col Jn Carlile as a Committee to confer with a Singing Master & report the terms at the next meeting.

No subsequent information is given concerning the result of the



inquiry. It is possible, however, that interested students were recommended to the singing school being held at the First Congregational Church under the direction of Lucius Cary, succeeded by Moses Noyes in 1799.

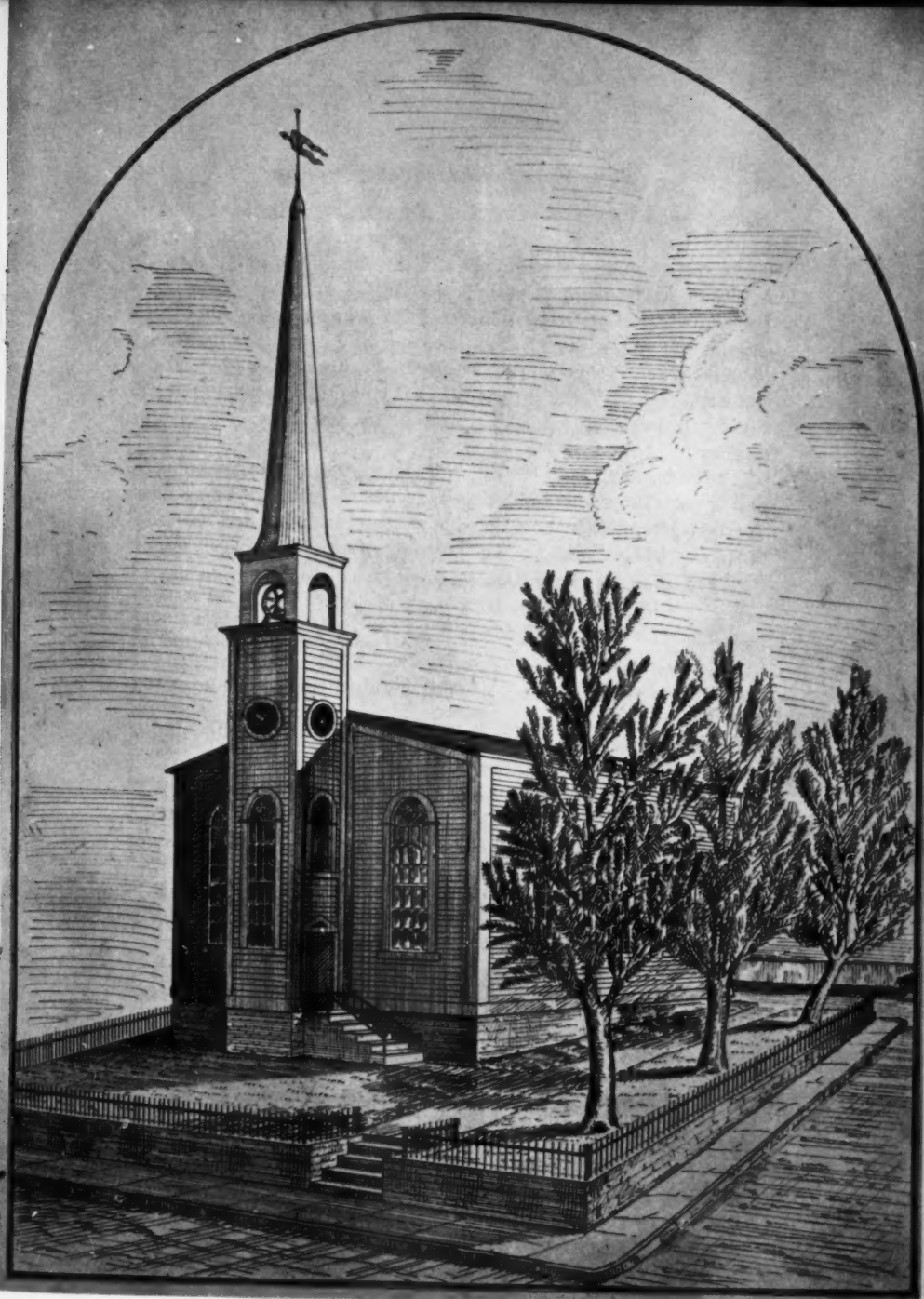
Mr. Clarke left for St. Michael's in Bristol, Rhode Island, in 1800, and the next few years were again devoted to a search for a possible successor. The Rev. Nathaniel Bowen served for ten months before leaving to become Bishop of South Carolina. John Lynn Blackburne came in 1805. His rectorship was to begin officially with his ordination, which was eventually refused on the basis of "uncanonical testimonial." With Mr. Blackburne's departure for England the Rev. Nathan Bourne Crocker, a Harvard graduate and former medical student, who had served on Deacon's Orders temporarily in 1803, returned in 1807 to continue as rector until his death in 1865.

In the following year, according to the minutes of St. John's Society, the church and organ were insured collectively at \$6,000. However, it was soon realized that the old "steeple-house," the first such building in Providence, was beyond further repair, and steps were taken to construct a new building on the same site. Following the Society's decision to begin subscriptions on January 2, 1810, with the Beneficent Congregational subscription papers as their model, events moved very rapidly. It is at this point that a badly water-stained ledger becomes invaluable toward reconstructing the episode through payments to various workmen.

On April 10, 1810, the pews in the old Town House, first meeting-house of the First Congregational Church, were repaired for use by St. John's.<sup>10</sup> If services were held here, then two other references have special significance. The Society appointed Mr. A. Jones, on August 6, to request the Psallonian Society under the direction of Oliver Shaw, organist and singing master at the Congregational meeting-house, to "favor the Church with their performance in Sacred Music on Christmas Day." An entry in the ledger dated July 9, 1811, states "paid w<sup>m</sup> Harding, pr Rct for E. Hathaway's Acct. for Singing, ec. . . . 59.66." According to professional rates of the times, the payment would cover the period in which services were in the Town

<sup>10</sup>The old Town House, long deserving of further study, served as a temporary church for several other congregations, including Second Baptists (1806), First Methodists (1822), and the first Roman Catholic congregation in Providence (1827).





KING'S CHURCH (1722-1810). From a sketch by Hon. Zachariah Allen, 1881.

House, suggesting that for lack of the church's organ in the temporary sanctuary, a chorister was employed to lead congregational singing.

The organ itself was removed from the old church in April, 1810, Welcome Miller being paid \$5.50 for five days "assisting to remove the Organ from St. John's Church." It was apparently stored in a nearby building, with a payment on June 5 for putting a new glass in "the Door of the shop where the Organ &c, are deposited." On this same day, Tuesday, the cornerstone was laid for the new church, the Society proceedings informing us that the exercises "began with singing."

The re-installation of the organ was a matter of primary concern, and a committee was formed to consider the matter. The church Warden, Jeremiah Jenkins, noted in a memorandum dated "Monday 4 March 1811," found among the pages of an 1844 Ledger,

As you informed that the Committee were to meet toDay — when it would be consulted on sending to Boston to obtain an organ artificer, will it not at the same time be advisable to ascertain from Mr. Gieb — New York on what terms he would come or send a competent Person. it will at least give you knowledge of the charge being reasonable or not — whether eventually expedient to send to him.

Whether or not such correspondence was written to Geib, builder of the First Congregational organ, cannot be proved.

Meanwhile the instrument had been found in need of repair after storage in the unidentified shop. The entries in the ledger by themselves create an accurate and colorful account of its eventual restoration and installation:

April 18	pd Bolston for 1 Sheep & 5 squirrel skins for repairing the Organ.....	1.12½
April 30	pd . . . blowing Bellows 1 day — tuning the Organ .....	.25
	pd a boy . . . Organ Blowing.....	.56
May 7	pd Young Hay for blowing the Organ Bellows 3 days .....	.75
May 11	pd Dan Thompson pr. do for setting up, repairing & tuning the Organ .....	56.37½
May 14	pd Saml E Hamlin pr Bill & rct for a copper Glue-kittle &c for repairing the Organ.....	3.54
May 28	pd Saml E Hamlin for Lead and casting Ornaments to cover the tops of the Two new front Pipes of the Organ.....	.45

June 4	pd Dan Thompson per Do for repairing an organ pipe which had been stolen & Injured; and for retuning some other Pipes, displaced by the Painter .....	1.50
June 10	pd Aaron Man for 2pr. of Butts, Screws & Brass Screw-knobs for the Organ loft Doors.....	.64

The organ was completed in time for the consecration of the new building on St. Barnabas' Day, June 11, 1811. The Psallonian Society again provided choral music for the event. The Order of Service, preserved through an anniversary reprint, was as follows:

#### HYMN

By the Psallonian Society  
Tune, Epsom

\* \* \*

#### THE CONSECRATION

Morning Prayers and Lessons

Ps. XXVI, v. 6, 7 & 8, with the Gloria Patri

The Collect, Epistle & Gospel

Psalm C

Sermon

\* \* \*

#### SELECT ORATORIO

By the Psallonian Society

\* \* \*

Hallelujah Chorus

Benediction

On June 15, according to the ledger, Oliver Shaw received six dollars "for attendance in practicing, and his performance on the Organ at the Dedication of the Church" and presumably directing the Psallonian Society. The organ received one final repair, with Daniel Hayford, Jr., paying seventy-five cents to the church "for the expense of repairing one of the Organ Pipes taken away & injured by his Brother."

The first regular organist at St. John's, as well as the first appearing in any of the extant church records, was John Muensch. In June, 1812, there is a ledger entry of \$44.80 paid to Jeremiah Jenkins "per Rect to pay the Organist to Easter last; 40 Dollr having been

pd before & chd to my acct as Treasurer." An easily overlooked payment to a John Muenscher appears in October. However, in January, 1813, he is at last identified when he received \$26 "for 1 quarter's salary as Organist." He continued in this position until 1819.

During this period there are clues to the existence of a church choir. Four stools were bought for the organ loft in 1812. In April, 1813, the account of John Carter was paid for "printing Morning Hymns, Notifications, &c." Throughout the book of pew rentals are the names of Simon Manuel, J. Rosario, Th. Simmins, T. F. Fullerton, Clement Hunt and Jn. Viol, listed as having made payments of varied amounts "in part of choir money." These people were apparently members of the church, singing voluntarily in the choir, while paying a regular subscription to the support of the ministry at St. John's.

In 1823 "E. Smith" became church organist at \$26 quarterly, leaving the years after the retirement of Mr. Muenscher a blank. It is possible that the Congregational singing master and organist, Moses Noyes, who became a member of St. John's in 1820, contributed his services as part of his support to the church, while maintaining his singing school in town. If he performed voluntarily, there would be no reason for his name to appear in the ledger, the remaining basis of information of music at the church.

Another Muenscher, this one named Henry, succeeded Mr. Smith in November, 1825. However, his remuneration of \$125 annually was for an undetermined reason delayed until 1828 when still another Muenscher, William by name, was the organist. Payments of 25 cents per week for "blowing the organ" were made at various times to E. H. Hopkins, J. Carter, Henry Booron, Thomas Stone, James Holmes, Newell Tyler and S. S. Hartwell. These items are listed with bills for "clearing the burying ground of Wild Parsnips . . . 50 cents," "washing out the organ loft . . . 75 cents," and the frequent replacement of the window in the new Sunday School room.

With the beginning of a new decade it is apparent that music at the church has reached a point of stability and continued progress. The earlier sparse references to a church choir become now almost continuous. This is most obvious by 1834, with E. R. Hansen<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup>E. R. Hansen founded the Sacred Music Society at the First Baptist Meeting House in 1834, according to William Dinneen's *Music At The Meeting House 1775-1958*, (Providence, 1958), p. 12. A further relationship to the choir of St. John's Church cannot be definitely established. A few years later, Mr. Hansen founded a "New England Conservatory of Music" with William Isenbeck.

reimbursed \$26 for the purchase of "Music Books of Anthems, Chants ec." Chairs costing \$48 were purchased for the organ loft (still referred to by this term, instead of the more prevalent "choir loft"). The sexton, Joseph T. Holmes, was paid 50 cents for opening the church for weekly choir rehearsals. His son, James, was paid "for carrying Books to and from the practising meetings of the choir 17 times @ .75 . . . . 4.25."

The names of individual singers appear in the 1840's. Lem H. Elliott, active in 1840 and 1841, was evidently followed by Edmund W. Tingley in 1842 and 1843. Mr. Tingley had been a chorister at the Congregational meetinghouse. He was succeeded by E. W. Howard. The singers were supplied with music stands from G. & D. Cleveland in 1840, 1846, and 1848. By this time, the Oxford movement was at last being felt at St. John's, at least as far as music was concerned. The names of Stephen Thurber and A. C. Green, identified a few years later as tenor and alto singers respectively, are found at this time, possibly the nucleus of a small boys' choir. Joseph Bourn joined the group in 1850 as a bass, and the church continued with this arrangement for several more years.

The position of the church organist, as with most present-day churches, was not static. William Muenscher remained until 1833, five years after accepting the appointment. His predecessor, Henry Muenscher, received his final payment in 1831. Toward the end of 1833, William began to borrow from his salary, resigning in April of the next year. Henry S. Frieze (apparently still a minor since remuneration was made to his father) and "J. Mack" were interim organists. Mrs. A. E. Hansen, probably the wife of E. R. Hansen, began a regular position at \$50 quarterly in September 1834, becoming the first woman organist to be identified in Rhode Island musical history. During the four years of her service substitutions were made by Moses Noyes, Mr. Hansen, and Henry Frieze, who eventually became the next organist in 1839. The sexton, Joseph Holmes, substituted for Henry in 1842.

Richard B. Taylor was appointed in 1843, continuing to 1847. Following his resignation, A. Green, listed as an alto in the choir, and "Mr. Hesse, Mr. Bissell [and] Mr. Cutler" were paid as interim organists. In 1849 Mr. Bissell was reimbursed for traveling expenses, evidently from Boston, continuing in 1850, but soon to be replaced

once more by Henry Frieze.

The state of the pipe organ on which these musicians played, after its final installation in 1811, is a matter of curiosity. Nothing is known about its existence, except for the payments to various "blowers." In 1833, the organ loft was "altered" at a cost of \$247.37 which might possibly be related to the late Franklin R. Cushman's claim that a new organ, made by an unknown builder, was installed in 1834.<sup>12</sup> No evidence can be found in the present records to substantiate this claim. A few later references at least show that some work was done on an organ at the church. In 1837 James Holmes was paid for blowing the organ, while it was tuned by E. & G. G. Hook of Boston at a cost of \$20. In 1842 John Bowden was paid \$25 for tuning and \$34 for "adding coupling stop to connect Great Organ & Swell keys." The Hook Company again tuned the organ in 1849, adding a set of pedal keys costing \$25. Considering these additions the 1834 instrument must have been merely a small, two-manual organ, without couplers or pedals. Mr. Cushman states that it was eventually replaced in 1851 by an E. & G. G. Hook, but documentation for this is also lacking.

At first glance the contributions of St. John's to music in Rhode Island seem disappointing. There are no great "firsts" to justify special recognition, such as the *first organ* or *first singing school* in America or even Rhode Island, although the significance of Mrs. A. E. Hansen as at least one of the earliest women church organists is not to be overlooked. Nor did the church foster any individual musicians who were to become important figures in American musical history, despite the fact that many evaluations have yet to be made in this relatively new field of research. The special value of the existing records of the church might best be summarized, in the light of present studies, as adding small chapters in the careers of such persons as Oliver Shaw, Moses Noyes, and E. R. Hansen who, although little recognized beyond Rhode Island, nevertheless were essential in its musical development.

<sup>12</sup>Franklin Richmond Cushman, *King's Church—St. John's Church 1722-1929* (Providence 1949), p. 11.

## NEW MEMBERS

*March 1, 1958 — May 31, 1958*

Mr. Burton Albert	Mr. David W. Patterson
Mrs. Donald S. Babcock	Rumford, R. I.
Mrs. W. Chester Cobb	Mr. Earle P. Perkins
Mr. John G. Coffey	Mr. Maxwell J. Perrotta
Buttonwoods, Warwick, R. I.	Mr. Earle F. Prout
Mr. Ralph R. Crosby	Barrington, R. I.
Mrs. Ralph R. Crosby	Mrs. Beverly S. Ridgely
Barrington, R. I.	Mrs. Clarence E. Sherman
Mrs. Preston H. Dalglish	Mrs. F. Snowden Skinner
Mrs. Katharine S. Dana	Mr. Richard F. Staples
Mrs. Harold C. Field	West Barrington, R. I.
Mrs. Philip C. Hardy	Mr. Alfred B. Stapleton
Miss Dorothy Hatch	Mr. Allyn K. Suttell
Miss Margaret Hatch	Mrs. Allyn K. Suttell
Mr. H. Nord Kitchen	Mr. Robert R. Taylor
Warwick, R. I.	Mrs. Raymond J. Walsh
Mr. Howard L. Merrill	Mr. Herbert C. Wells, Jr.
Barrington, R. I.	Mr. James Lucas Wheaton, Jr.
Mr. Robert P. Miranda	Pawtucket, R. I.
Mr. Harry J. Oatley	Mr. S. Everett Wilkins
	Mrs. S. Everett Wilkins
Mr. Randall H. Young	

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## NEWS-NOTES

So many requests have been received for a repetition of the historical pilgrimage made to the Concord Antiquarian Society a few years ago that another similar venture is being proposed for October 18, 1958. The special object of the tour will be to see the General Salem Towne manor house at Old Sturbridge Village. Their most recent acquisition, it is a fine house of the more sophisticated type, with outstanding woodwork and decoration. A competent member of the Village staff will point out to our group the noteworthy details. A bus holding forty persons will be chartered, and the first forty applications will be honored in order of their receipt. Written applications should be sent to The Rhode Island Historical Society, 52 Power Street, Providence 6, Rhode Island, before October 9.

*continued on page 89*



## A HALF SHEET OF STOLEN RHODE ISLAND BILLS

by KENNETH SCOTT

Department of Modern Languages, Wagner College

IT WAS VOTED by the General Assembly of Rhode Island in session at East Greenwich in March, 1776, to print £20,000 in bills, 1,600 of sixty shillings, 2,000 of forty shillings, 3,000 of thirty, twenty, ten, five, four and three shillings each, 2,100 of two shillings, 2,000 of one shilling and 2,400 of ninepence. The signers of the bills were to be

John G. Wanton, John Dexter, John Cole, Joseph Clarke, Welcome Arnold, Thomas Greene, James Congdon, 3d, and William Ellery, three of whom were to sign all bills of five shillings and upwards, and two of them all bills under five shillings. Mr. John Carter was to print the paper money at the rate of one shilling and fourpence for every hundred bills, and Mr. David Wilkinson was appointed to superintend the press.<sup>1</sup>

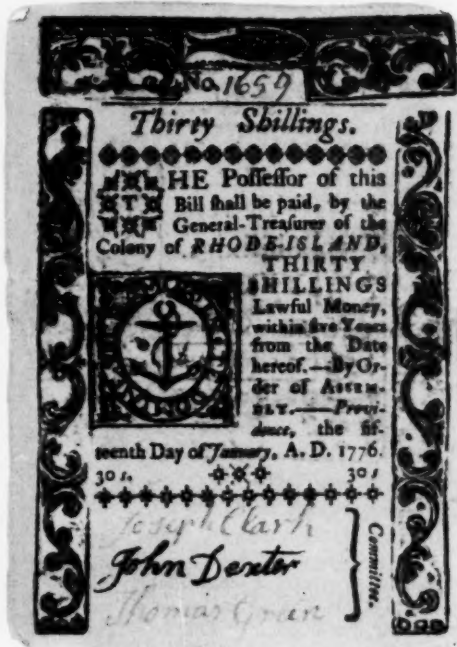
Wilkinson, a justice of the peace, who was born at Smithfield on September 30, 1746, was the son of Izrael Wilkinson, and it is recorded that on April 25, 1773, he married Lydia Spear.<sup>2</sup> He was experienced in the task for which he was chosen, for in May, 1775, the Assembly had appointed

Wilkinson and Ebenezer Thompson, "one or the other of them" to

<sup>1</sup>Records of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England (Providence: Cooke, Jackson and Co., 1863), pp. 494-495.

<sup>2</sup>James N. Arnold, *Vital Records of Rhode Island* (Providence: Narragansett Historical Publishing Co., 1892), III, Smithfield, pp. 80 and 121.

<sup>3</sup>Records of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England, VII, p. 327; there is a record of his being paid in 1777 the sum of £3/6/- for superintending the press in 1775 (*Id.* VIII, p. 137).





attend the press continually when another emission of £ 20,000 was being printed.<sup>3</sup>

It chanced that on a public or town meeting day about the middle of March there were gathered in a room of Mr. Wilkinson's house in Providence Daniel Jackson, Isaac Tuckerman, Nicholas Clarke, Hopestill McNeal, Thomas Manchester and a housewright of Providence named William Hutton. They were "a playing for a Bowl of Punch" or some small matter when Hutton opened a law book and extracted a half sheet of four 30s. Rhode Island bills folded in four doubles. He showed his find to the group and they were joking about the bills when Wilkinson entered. When he saw what the men were about he was out of temper that they should discuss the matter and curtly told them that the bills were neither signed nor numbered and were of no consequence. Hutton thereupon put the half sheet back in the book.

A fortnight later, however, Hutton was back at Mr. Wilkinson's, where he opened the book again, took out the half sheet and signed and numbered the bills. Presently he passed them off, one to Benjamin Nichols, keeper of the White Horse Tavern in Newport, one to a widow named Smith in the same town who lived next to a Mr. Roach, one to Captain Joseph Manchester — who returned it as counterfeit — and on June 18 one to Stephen Morse, a silversmith of Providence. The same day, June 18, he was taken up for having passed the bill to Morse and was examined before four justices at Newport.



The next day Daniel Jackson made a deposition about what he knew of Hutton's finding the half sheet in the law book, and David Wilkinson likewise was examined. The latter's statement ran as follows:

"David Wilkinson being brought before the Court of Sessions for Examination saith, That being appointed by the Genl. Assembly to inspect the Press and to deliver out the Bills ordered to be emitted by the Colony of Rhode-Island, the two first Impressions he took a very exact account of in writing, as they were struck off and delivered out but the other Impressions he attended upon when he was so hurried he could not keep a very exact account of, That the Committee took of the Bills till they said they had enough and then the Press was stopped, That the Forme at some Times was locked, at other Times was removed into a Room where the Bills were kept, That he kept the Key, that at first they had a very good Lock to the Form that afterward it was lost or missing and they had only a common Padlock, that the Committee used to come and take from him the Bills from the Room where they were kept—sometimes he used to cut them and delivered them in half Sheets of the Large Bills he thinks that the Printer used to deliver me the Bills when there was any defect in striking them off, which I used to ram into my Pocket, carry Home and generally used to burn—For sometimes they used to be too black, sometimes too pale and sometimes torn, and I used to carry Home some of such every Day, and I used to carry none Home unless some out of the Sheet was defective, sometimes there might not be more than one Bill in a Sheet defective, I did not stand to examine them but as they handed them to me I put them in my Pocket to carry home to burn—When I carried them Home, and finding some of them to be good and fair Bills, I smoothed them out, put some of them into my Law Book in half Sheets, not knowing but they might be wanted, and when the whole Impression was done, I burnt them I had a Bundle in my Chest at Home part of which or the whole I delivered to Judge Bowler to carry Home to sign. I think about five hundred small Bills of the first or second Impression—I am not certain that there were any Thirty Shillings Bills of January Emission that I carried Home, or of seeing any of that Sum at my House, but there might be—There were sundry Persons sometimes past at my House and in my Roome where my Desk was, my Law Book was on my Desk with several large Books on it to press the Bills I had put into it so as to make them smooth—When I went into the Room they began to joke me about some Bills they had found in my law Book, I told they could do them no good if they had taken them, I looked into the Book and found they had put them back, there were several two or three half Sheets in the Book I afterward took them out, I thought all of them, and burnt them, I think they were all in smooth

half Sheets not doubled—I never remember to have left the Press unlocked or at work upon any occasion—I dont remember that Wm Hutton was one of the Persons at my House as abovementioned but he might be for I dont know nor ever did know him till at Newport the other Day he spoke to me, I told him I did not know him, he said his Name was Hutton; I had heard there was such a Person.”

Hutton secured bail on July 23 and was released on a bond of £ 500, given to Metcalf Bowler on that date, with Amos Atwell, Esq., of Providence, and John Wanton, the son of Gideon Wanton of Newport, merchant, as his sureties, each in the amount of £ 250. By its terms he was to appear at the September, 1776 term of the Superior Court.<sup>4</sup>

Hutton pleaded guilty to his indictment by grand jury for uttering the false bill to silversmith Morse. The court imposed the light sentence of a fine of £ 15 and costs and one month in jail. This episode is one of the rare cases in colonial counterfeiting where genuine bills fell into the wrong hands and were signed and numbered, and it is of no little interest since it reveals the procedure of the person charged with supervising the press.

<sup>4</sup> This recognizance, Hutton's examination, Wilkinson's examination, Jackson's deposition, and Hutton's indictment for passing the counterfeit to Stephen Morse are all in the Superior Court Files of Providence County, 1776.

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#### NEWS-NOTES (*continued from page 85*)

The Rhode Island Preservation Seminar, held May 9-11, met for its Friday lectures in John Brown House. Since the drawing room, currently used by the Society for its meetings, is so small, the number of applications was necessarily limited. We were fortunate in having the co-operation of the Preservation Society of Newport County; the Newport Historical Society; the Heritage Foundation of Rhode Island; and the Providence Preservation Society, which took over the arduous task of organizing the seminar. We were greatly pleased by the co-operation of all the interested groups in the entire state, and we are indebted to the National Trust for advice as well as for active participation. Specific problems of preservation were handled in the Friday sessions by experts in the field. We are particularly pleased that this part of the program received such favorable reaction, since it had been suggested by the Society at a general meeting of the original sponsors held at John Brown House last fall.



## 41. SIDE CHAIR

ONE OF A PAIR

*Mahogany*

Massachusetts or Rhode Island c. 1800

Traditionally this chair is of Rhode Island origin, but it resembles closely in design those carved by Samuel McIntyre (1757-1815) of Salem, Massachusetts, who at the turn of the nineteenth century was taking the lead in style even as the Goddard-Townsend dynasty of Newport, Rhode Island, had taken it in the previous century.

The rectangular back with paneled top rail is carved with knot and swag design. The three tapered vertical bars are turned at the top and the bottom and flattened into a long arrow to carry the pendant bellflower carved detail. Unusual is the cut-out bottom rail, which produces a feeling of grace combined with strength. The seat is upholstered over the rails with modern haircloth, ornamented by nailheads in a swag design. The square tapered front legs have full spade feet; the square back legs are nicely raked for strength and balance.

While this Federal chair may strike one as a Salem product, the lower cut-out back rail is an element which must certainly determine its attribution.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



## 42. SIDE CHAIR

ONE OF A SET OF FOUR

*Maple*

Early eighteenth century

Probably Rhode Island

This maple banister-back chair has a simple yoke crest, stopped abruptly at the back post union, with sharply outlined banisters. The turnings on the back posts are of fair quality, while the front stretcher turnings show some strength. The rush seats are not original.

This obviously unsophisticated chair is doubtless of country origin and reputedly was among the household effects of General Nathanael Greene.

Bequest of Mary L. Farrar





## 43. LOOKING GLASS

*Mahogany*

Philadelphia c. 1760

Gilded moulding, labeled John Elliott, Sr.

John Elliott of Philadelphia produced and labeled various styles of looking glasses from the simple Queen Anne with no bottom scalloping through the pedimented George the Second styles to the early rococo type with top and bottom scalloping like the example illustrated here. In his latest period, that of 1768-1776 Elliott produced the most ornately scalloped type, commonly known as the Chippendale mirror. His label, written both in German for the large Pennsylvania Dutch population, and also in English reads:

“John Elliott

“At his Looking-glass Store, the Sign of the Bell and Looking Glass, in Walnut St. *Philadelphia Imports* and sells all Sorts of English Looking-Glasses at the lowest Rates.

“He also new Quick Silvers and frames old Glasses and supplys People with new Glass to their own Frames.”

Elliott's first address was on Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 1753-1762, while his second was on Walnut Street from 1762-1767. From 1768-1776 he used a third type of label. Elliott announced on May 8, 1767, that he was giving up the importation of mirrors and offered to sell his shop and quicksilvering business. His son, however, began advertising English glasses directly after the American Revolution. This example illustrated here has a certain simplicity and captivates the fancy rather more than do the more elaborate mirrors.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



## 44. HOLMES WEAVER CLOCK

*Mahogany*

Tall Clock c. 1790-1800

Case by Holmes Weaver of Newport, Rhode Island

A transitional clock case by a cabinetmaker, trained in the Goddard-Townsend tradition. The ogee curved feet and plain mahogany base and door are related to the earlier period while the delicate fretwork of the hood, the brass mounts on the fluted quarter columns of the body and full column of the head of the block, as well as the spherical brass finials, are elements of the Hepplewhite style. The painted face with stylized spandrels is fairly simple for such a handsome clock case.



The Holmes Weaver label found on the door of the clock is illustrated. It was taken from a brass plate engraved by H. Barber and now to be found in the Newport Historical Society. The price tag of \$60 gives us an idea of comparative prices. Weaver was born in Middletown, Rhode Island, July 24, 1769, and died at Newport in 1848. "In this town on Tuesday last, Holmes Weaver, Esq. died in the 79th year of his age. Formerly Clerk of the Supreme Court of this county, a man respected and regretted by all who knew him." From the *Newport Mercury* of February 19, 1848.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



